

A Radical Philosophy?

In three essays, written in 2024, David Myatt focused on three topics: (i) the question of suffering; (ii) the temporal nature of human manufactured abstractions; and (iii) the question of authority; with the essays being: (a) *Notes On War, Suffering, And Personal Judgement*; (b) *Developing The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, and (c) *Reflections On Conflict And Suffering*. [1]

The essays not only amplify and to some extent develop what he wrote in his book *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos* [2] but also provide some practical examples of the principles of that philosophy.

The Question Of Authority

In *Reflections On Conflict And Suffering*, he wrote, adding a quotation from his 2015 essay *Personal Reflexions On Some Metaphysical Questions*,

In regard to authority, individual empathy and a personal pathei-mathos inclines us to consider authority as personal because they not only engender a certain humility, a knowing or awareness of our past errors and mistakes and thus of our fallibility, but also because both have a 'local horizon' so that what is

"beyond our personal empathic knowing of others, beyond our knowledge and our experience [our pathei-mathos], beyond the limited (local) range of our empathy and that personal (local) knowledge of ourselves which pathei-mathos reveals – is something we rationally, we humbly, accept we do not know and so cannot judge or form a reasonable, a fair, a balanced, opinion about. For empathy, like pathei-mathos, lives within us; manifesting, as both empathy and pathei-mathos do, the always limited nature, the horizon, of our own knowledge and understanding".

He expanded on the question of authority in his 2025 *Religion, Exegesis, And The Fallacy Of Appeal To Authority* [3] in which he controversially argued that, since most of the followers of the Christian religion past and present depend or depended on translations of the written texts of the New Testament, those followers mostly unknowingly commit or committed the fallacy of appeal to authority. He contrasts this with his philosophy of pathei-mathos, "where it is personal empathy, pathei-mathos, and personal research using primary sources, which inform and guide us."

In *Notes On War, Suffering, And Personal Judgement* he was quite forthright and again mentioned the personal nature of empathy and pathei-mathos:

"It is my contention that the wordless knowing which personal empathy provides or can provide together with the wordless knowing arising from a personal pathei-mathos is a moral alternative to the abrogation of personal judgement and of personal conscience required by a nation-State and by established religions in the particular matters of war and the violence involved in supra-personal conflicts where there is an assumed 'us' and a 'them'. A moral alternative because there is a personal, individual, horizon to both empathy and pathei-mathos."

The Question Of Suffering And The Nation State

In *Reflections On Conflict And Suffering*, before a long section on how causal abstractions and the denotata which names them cause discord and suffering, he quotes from the *Morality, Virtues, and Way of Life* part of his *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, [2]

"The numinous sympathy - συμπάθεια (sympatheia, benignity) - with another living being that empathy provides naturally inclines us to treat other living beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated: with fairness, compassion, honour, and dignity. It also inclines us not to judge those whom we do not know; those beyond the purveu - beyond the range of - our faculty of empathy."

One of the causes of suffering, one of the causal abstractions, which is described in all three essays is the Nation State, with Myatt writing:

"In both ancient and modern times causal abstractions and the categories developed from them have been and are used to categorize human beings, as for example in regard to the supra-personal abstraction, the entity, termed 'the nation-State' where individual human beings and families are considered to be, or not to be, 'citizens' of that entity and often treated accordingly, with citizens having certain privileges and freedoms often denied to non-citizens.

More recently, causal abstractions and the categories developed from them have been deployed to describe individual human beings and their behaviour both personal and social." *Developing The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*. [3]

In that *Developing* essay he outlines the philosophical and practical basis for living according to the personal understanding provided by empathy and pathei-mathos, and which understanding "enable[s] us to circumvent causal abstractions".

Which basis is radical, dispensing as it does with politics, conventional (organized) religion, and the Nation State:

[T]he numinous way of pathei-mathos betakes us or can betake us as individuals beyond the acceptance of a supra-personal authority, and thus beyond the demand by some supra-personal authority that we individuals accept or have to accept such a supra-personal authority, and which authority, in the Western world was described in the Christian writings of Augustine (b.354 CE, d.430 CE), as for example in his *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos* where in Book XIX, chapter xiii, he wrote of the necessity of a hierarchy in which God is the supreme authority, with peace between human beings and God requiring obedience to that authority; and with peace between human beings, and civil peace, also of necessity requiring obedience to an order in which each person has their allotted place, *Ordo est parium dispariumque rerum sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio*.

Modern nation-States have simply replaced God as the supreme authority with Prime Ministers, Presidents, and those who are described as elected "representatives of the people", or in case of some nation-States with some individual or individuals or some unelected representatives who or which have assumed authority by means such as a coup d'état or similar means, but all of whom expect the people they rule to obey whatever decisions or laws or diktats they make [...]

Since the numinous way of pathei-mathos is based on personal empathy and personal pathei-mathos which develop an appreciation of the limitation, the infortunity, of words, and of the categories derived from them, and thus engenders in an individual a knowing of the limited nature of their understanding and of their fallibility, the numinous way of pathei-mathos is apolitical since politics is derived from and dependant on words, spoken and written, and on supra-personal often ideological categories as well as on supra-personal organizations or movements with a particular agenda or particular aims.

For an appreciation of the infortunity of words is a wordless-knowing, born of empathy and pathei-mathos, of the cycle of suffering; of how we humans continue to repeat the errors of the past caused as such errors often are by some suffering-causing causal abstractions championed by some supra-personal authority.

However, it is important to emphasize that Myatt is not presenting his own weltanschauung as an alternative but rather suggesting that other individuals develop their own 'numinous weltanschauung' using their own empathy and pathei-mathos as its foundation. This implies

"trying to cultivate within ourselves the virtues mentioned by Cicero – self-restraint, dignity, fairness, honesty – and implies we have no concern for or we seek to cultivate no concern for supra-personal hierarchies and supra-personal authority – whether political, religious, or otherwise – and thus move away from, try to distance ourselves from, the consequences of such supra-personal hierarchies and supra-personal authority manifest as the consequences are and have been, throughout our [human] history, in war, prejudice, intolerance, unfairness, extremism, and persecution in the name of some ideology, some religion, or because someone has commanded us to persecute those that they and others have declared are 'our' enemies, and which war and persecutions are often, especially in modern times, accompanied by propaganda and lies." [4]

The section *In The Real World* of the essay *On Conflict And Suffering* suggests that such 'numinous weltanschauungen' are mystical

"in the sense of being contemplative and perhaps in withdrawing internally or externally from society, alone, with a partner, or with one's family. It is possibly, at the very least, a modern manifestation of The Beatitudes and to personally act and to live with an awareness and appreciation of the numinous and thus with self-restraint, dignity, fairness, honesty and avoidance of hubris."

In regard to The Beatitudes (Gospel of Matthew, 5:1–10) Myatt provides his own somewhat radical translation and his commentary as an appendix, which we include here in our Appendix. Which translation is, as with his translation of and commentary on the Gospel of John [5] and his two essays *Religion, Exegesis, And The Fallacy Of Appeal To Authority* [6] and *The Johannine Weltanschauung* [7] fundamentally radical as evident in *The Johannine Weltanschauung* where he notes that:

there were several significant passages from that Gospel which inclined me to consider whether the life and the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth annulled the Old Testament both as a guide to understanding and appreciating Theos, the supreme deity, and as a guide to daily life and remembrance through ritual and prayer [...]

it could be argued that Jesus abrogates the Old Testament because it is no longer needed since "whomsoever hears my Logos, and trusts who sent me, has life everlasting."

Conclusion

Abrogation is a suitable term to describe how and why Myatt's philosophy of pathei-mathos, and future weltanschauungen based on empathy and pathei-mathos, abrogate supra-personal authority including that of the Nation State.

As he wrote in the *Vexata Quaestio* section of *The Johannine Weltanschauung*,

"Apropos authority and Christianity, and the 'heresy' or unorthodoxy of various interpretations of texts, the schisms, the reformations and divisions, over the past two millennia, my answer derives from one of the the

axioms of my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos: that it is the empathy and the pathei-mathos of individuals which can wordlessly reveal the ontological reality both of our own physis and of how we, as sentient beings, relate to other living beings and to Being itself. Which, given the personal and the individual nature of empathy and pathei-mathos, implies that it is for us as individuals to decide.

My own pathei-mathos inclines me to favour the message of personal love, of humility, of trying not to repeat our mistakes, of appreciating that there is some-thing, a type of Being, beyond and more powerful than us and whatever we bring-into-being be it an idea, an ideology, a creed, a nation, a State, a jurisprudence, or an Empire. Some of us may name this Being as 'God'; or θεός or 'the gods' to which they give personal names. Some may describe it, as many hermeticists do, as The One, The Monas, The Father who is both male and female: ἀρρενόθηλος.

I have discovered this message in the Gospel of John; in the Corpus Hermeticum; in many of the writings of Cicero; in the poetry of Sappho and TS Eliot; in the music of JS Bach; and in many other writings and Cræfts [8] ancient and modern."

Thus, the philosophy of pathei-mathos is indeed radical in the sense of manifesting a fundamental change in our perception and understanding, and is a return to the understanding manifest in the ancient hermetic and Greco-Roman pagan traditions which traditions formed the basis for the European Renaissance.

Gelis Sangster et al
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[1] The three essays are included in *Rescriptions 2023-2025*, <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/rescriptions.pdf>

[2] *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, seventh edition, 2022, <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf>

[3] *Developing The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos: Impersonal Abstractions, The Modern World, And The Axioms Of Empathy And Pathei-Mathos*. In *Rescriptions*, op.cit.

[4] *Persecution And War*, 2018. https://archive.org/download/persecution-and-war/Persecution_And_War.pdf

[5] In *DW Myatt: Greek And Latin Translations*, https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/dwm_translations.pdf

[6] *Religion, Exegesis, And The Fallacy Of Appeal To Authority*, <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/dwm-religion-exegesis-fallacy-1.pdf>

[7] In *Selected Writings 2012-2024*, <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/selected-writings-dwm.pdf>

[8] In a footnote, in relation to the term *Cræfts*, Myatt writes:

this older spelling in an esoteric context implies [...] a particular Arte, the application of particular abilities, skills, and knowledge, especially abilities, skills, and knowledge learned or received in the traditional manner from a master of the Arte or Arts in question. In this esoteric sense, theos is the Master Craftsman, with Palingenesis being a Cræft, an Arte that "is not taught; rather, it is presenced by and when the theos desires". *A Note On The Term Noesis In Tractate XIII, in Hermetica And Alchemy*, <https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/dwm-hermetica.pdf>

Appendix

The Beatitudes

The Learning On The Hillside

**Τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον
The Gospel According To Matthew
5:1-10**

Text

- 1 Ἰδὼν δὲ τοὺς ὄχλους ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος, καὶ καθίσαντος αὐτοῦ προσῆλθαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ·
- 2 καὶ ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς λέγων·
- 3 Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

4 μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται.

5 μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν.

6 μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.

7 μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται.

8 μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.

9 μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται.

10 μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

Translation

1 Observing the multitudes, he ascended the hill and, having sat down, his disciples approached him.

2 Then, a revelation, for he instructed those there by saying this:

3 Fortunate, those humble with spiritus, for theirs is the Kingdom of Empyrean.

4 Fortunate, those who grieve, for they shall have solace.

5 Fortunate, the gentle, for they shall acquire the Earth.

6 Fortunate, those who hunger and thirst for fairness, for they shall be replete.

7 Fortunate, the compassionate, for they shall receive compassion.

8 Fortunate, the refined of heart, for they shall perceive Theos.

9 Fortunate, the peaceable, for they shall be called children of Theos.

10 Fortunate, those harassed due to their fairness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Empyrean.

Commentary

1. ὄρος. Here a hill, rather than a mountain.

2.

ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ. I take this metaphorically as in a disclosing or a revealing, not literally as in "opening his mouth."

those there. Although the Greek text does not explicitly state the fact, the context suggests that Jesus addressed both the multitude and his disciples.

3.

μακάριος. A difficult word to translate since "blessed" has acquired particular (sometimes moralistic) meanings as a result of nearly two thousand years of exegesis, while "happy" is rather prosaic. The context - as in ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν - suggests "fortunate".

πτωχός. Usually translated as "poor" which however has too many exegetical and modern connotations, and does not express the metaphorical sense here which implies being "humble" in respect of τὸ πνεῦμα.

τῷ πνεύματι [...] τῶν οὐρανῶν. In respect of τὸ πνεῦμα as the spiritus (rather than as the Spirit) and οὐρανός as Empyrean (rather than Heaven), qv. my commentary on John 1:32, [1] from which this an extract:

οὐρανός here is always translated as 'heaven' although the term 'heaven' - used in the context of the Gospels - now has rather different connotations than the Greek οὐρανός, with the word 'heaven' now often implying something explained by almost two thousand years of exegesis and as depicted, for example, in medieval and Renaissance Christian art. However, those hearing or reading this particular Greek gospel for the first time in the formative years of Christianity would most probably have assumed the usual Greek usage of "the heavens" in the sense of the "the star-filled firmament above" or in the sense of "the sky" or as the abode of theos and/or of the gods, ἐν οὐρανῷ θεοί

[...]

It therefore seems apposite to suggest a more neutral word than 'heaven' as a translation of οὐρανός and one which might not only be understood in various 'classical' ways by an audience of Greek speakers (such as the ways described above) but also be open to a new, and Christian, interpretation consistent with the milieu that existed when the Gospel of John was written and first heard. That is, before the exegesis of later centuries and long before post-Roman Christian iconography. Hence my suggestion of the post-classical Latin term Empyrean, which can bear the interpretation of the abode of theos and/or of the gods, of "the sky", of the "the star-filled firmament above"; and a Christian one suggested by Genesis 2.8 - παράδεισον ἐν Εδεμ

(the Paradise of Eden) - and also by shamayim.

5. πρᾶος. Gentle - in the sense of mild, balanced, temperament - rather than "meek".

6. δικαιοσύνη. Fairness. Not some abstract, legalistic, "justice", and not "righteousness" which word has over centuries acquired sometimes strident and disputable moralistic meanings as well as implying a certain conformity to accepted (and disputable or dogmatic) standards.

7. ἐλεήμων. The classical Latin term misericordia - used by Jerome, and the origin of the English word merciful - expresses the sense well, which is of συμπάθεια (sympatheia, benignity) resulting in compassion. Cf. Luke 11.41 (πλὴν τὰ ἐνόητα δότε ἐλεημοσύνην, καὶ ἰδοὺ πάντα καθαρά ὑμῖν ἐστίν), Acts 10:2, κτλ.

8.

οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ. Literally, those whose hearts are clean, in the physical sense, as in having undertaken a ritual cleansing of the body. Cf. Corpus Hermeticum, Poemander 22, [2] where as in Luke 11.41 - qv. ἐλεήμων in v. 7 here - it occurs in relation to compassion, the compassionate:

παραγίνομαι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ ὁ Νοῦς τοῖς ὁσίοις καὶ ἀγαθοῖς καὶ καθαροῖς καὶ ἐλεήμοσι, τοῖς εὐσεβοῦσι, καὶ ἡ παρουσία μου γίνεται βοήθεια, καὶ εὐθὺς τὰ πάντα γνωρίζουσι καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἰλάσκονται ἀγαπητικῶς καὶ εὐχαριστοῦσιν εὐλογοῦντες καὶ ὑμνοῦντες τεταγμένως πρὸς αὐτὸν τῇ στοργῇ

I, perceiviation, attend to those of respectful deeds, the honourable, the refined, the compassionate, those aware of the numinous; to whom my being is a help so that they soon acquire knowledge of the whole and are affectionately gracious toward the father, fondly celebrating in song his position.

In respect of καθαροῖς, I prefer refined here - as in the Corpus Hermeticum - rather than 'pure' given the disputable nature of the term 'pure' and the connotations acquired over centuries be they religious, sanctimonious, political, or otherwise.

θεὸς. For reasons explained in my commentary on verse I of chapter one of The Gospel According To John - and in my commentaries on tractates from the Corpus Hermeticum [2] - I transliterate θεὸς.

9. οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί. The peaceable ones, which includes pacificators - those who are pacificatory, and thus who are conciliatory and who actively seek peace - and those who have a peaceable disposition.

10. διώκω. Harass, rather than "persecuted" which has acquired too many modern and especially political connotations. Cf. John 5:16, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐδίωκον οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ὅτι ταῦτα ἐποίει ἐν σαββάτῳ, "and thus did the Judaeans harass Jesus because he was doing such things on the Sabbath."

My interpretation, based on John 5:16, is that those who are harassed are so on account of (ἐνεκα) their fairness, not because those who are harassing them disparage or hate fairness in general.

David Myatt
30.iii.18

Notes

[1] My translation and commentary - of chapters 1-5 - is available at <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/gospel-according-to-john/>

[2] D. Myatt. *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates*. In *Hermetica And Alchemy*, <https://perceiverations.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/hermetica-alchemy-dwmyatt.pdf> ≡ ≡ ≡

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Greek Bible text from:
Novum Testamentum Graece, 28th revised edition,
Edited by Barbara Aland and others, 2012, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart.